



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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### **Fuel waiver could increase ozone formation**

BATON ROUGE – Gas distributors throughout the state were recently granted a waiver that allows them to use a winter blend of gasoline six weeks earlier than usual for all but 16 parishes. The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Quality worked together to approve the waiver that could alleviate fuel interruptions and shortages, as well as to help with recovery from Hurricanes Gustav and Ike.

The shift to winter fuel increases the chances of a high ozone days because the winter fuel releases more precursors which help form ozone such as volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. These increases, along with warm, dry and stagnant weather conditions, can be conducive to the formation of ozone. Therefore, the state is encouraging the public to check the Air Quality Index daily and plan your activities accordingly. Sensitive groups, such as the elderly and young children, should take precautions such as limiting outdoor activities should the AQI reach the orange level.

Due to the increased possibility of ozone formation, the state is asking everyone to take voluntary measures to help reduce the chance of ozone formation. Since many parishes in the state could potentially be classified as nonattainment areas because of the new more restrictive ozone standard, it is more important than ever for everyone to practice ozone action measures daily. Industry has been asked to inspect seals, use best available technology to look for leaks and to implement best management practices to reduce any leaks.

The public is also being asked to take ozone-reducing measures. These measures include:

- Carpooling, combining errands, taking public transportation and limiting daytime driving
- Fuel when it's cool and mow or use gas powered combustion engines after 6 p.m.
- Take your lunch to work
- Drive "emission-wise" – avoid prolonged idling and jack rabbit starts
- Conserve energy in your home and spread the word

To receive daily air quality information forecast email from Enviroflash go to [www.enviroflash.info](http://www.enviroflash.info) or select "LA" from the state menu, select a forecast area or go to <http://batonrougearea.enviroflash.info>, <http://neworleansarea.enviroflash.info> or <http://shreveportarea.enviroflash.info>.

Everyone has a stake in clean air and a healthy environment. Be part of the solution.